

balance the budget. It just simply is not there.

So suddenly we have a crisis in Medicare that cries out for immediate action, for immediate cuts totaling 80 percent of the money they need to fund their tax cuts. No, the crisis is not so much in Medicare, and it is not a new crisis. In fact, Medicare, according to the trustees, is in better condition today than it was a year ago. They have put off its potential insolvency for 12 months into the next century.

No, the crisis is in the corporate board rooms. The crisis is in the country club cocktail lounges. The crisis is that the Republicans in their contract promised the most powerful and the most wealthy and the most well off Americans a nice, big, fat, juicy tax cut, and they promised everybody else in America they would balance the budget. And now they want to balance the budget on the backs of the seniors by cutting Medicare to fund their tax cuts.

Congress is going to say no to this outrage, this new abomination worse than the worst aspects of the first 100 days of this Congress.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning business, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. EWING] at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are reminded during these days of the momentous occasion of the ending of conflict in Europe 50 years ago. As our thoughts go out in thanksgiving for the blessings of peace, we remember specially those members of our Armed Forces whose dedication and sacrifice brought new hope to so many people who had known destitution and suffering and death. We laud all those who labored for freedom and recall with praise their commitment and their allegiance to liberty. O gracious God, whose power created the Heavens and the Earth and whose grace is all about, may Your blessing be upon those who gave of themselves that others might live. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, further proceedings on this vote will be postponed and the vote will be taken later today.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CHABOT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 53. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress regarding a private visit by President Lee Teng-hui of the Republic of China on Taiwan to the United States.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed a bill of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 103. An act entitled the "Lost Creek Land Exchange Act of 1995".

The message also announced that pursuant to sections 1928a-1928d of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BROWN, Mr. GREGG, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. JOHNSTON, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. AKAKA as members of the Senate delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly Spring Meeting during the First Session of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, to be held in Budapest, Hungary, May 25-29, 1995.

The message also announced that pursuant to sections 276h-276k of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints Mr. BINGAMAN as a member of the Senate delegation to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group during the First Session of the

One Hundred Fourth Congress, to be held in Tucson, AZ, May 12-14, 1995.

The message also announced that pursuant to sections 276d-276g of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair on behalf of the Vice President, appoints Mr. GRASSLEY and Mrs. HUTCHISON to the Senate delegation to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group during the First Session of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, to be held in Huntsville, ON, Canada, May 18-22, 1995.

The message also announced that pursuant to sections 276d-276g of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints Mrs. MURRAY as vice chairman of the Senate delegation to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group during the One Hundred Fourth Congress.

AWOL

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, as President Clinton goes to Moscow, he once again has dodged his responsibility.

This time, he has failed to exhibit any leadership when it comes to saving Medicare.

According to the Medicare Board of Trustees, a group which includes three members of the President's Cabinet, Medicare will go bankrupt by the year 2002.

Republicans are developing a plan which will protect, improve and preserve the Medicare system. We will do this by eliminating fraud and abuse, while slowing the explosive growth in costs.

Instead of joining with us in our reform efforts or offering solutions of his own, the President has gone AWOL. Yes, he is absent without leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want real leadership from their President.

They want us to take steps to save Medicare, not allow its costs to continue to skyrocket to the point of bankruptcy.

I urge the President to live up to his responsibilities and work with Congress to save Medicare.

REFORMING MEDICARE

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, anyone reading the paper or watching the news last week knows that Medicare is on the front line in the battles that lie ahead. Seniors are watching and what they see is troubling. Yes, we do need to reform Medicare—but there is a right way and a wrong way. Last year we had the chance to strengthen Medicare the right way—in the context of health

care reform. Now we have to make up for a lost opportunity. And now seniors will bear the burden and pay the price for gridlock. Let us agree that the first rule of reform will be the same as it is in medicine: First, do no harm.

Let us agree to put partisan interests aside and put seniors first.

Let us agree that while good health care requires choice, managed care, when it is just managed profit, is wrong.

That prevention, home care, prescription medicine is quality health care for high quality lives.

Finally, let us pledge that we will not destroy Medicare in our effort to reform Medicare.

REPUBLICANS TACKLE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, SEEK A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, over the last 4 months the liberal Democrats in Congress have been feeding the public a steady diet of class warfare rhetoric. Somehow they think that the budget problems we face will magically disappear if the phrase tax cut for the rich is repeated over and over.

This strategy exposes the fact that liberal Democrats have a lack of conviction in solving the Nation's problems. They offer no leadership and they seek to divide America along class lines.

Since the start of the 104th Congress, Republicans have offered a vision of America that can solve its problems and we proved that we can keep our promises.

Republicans here in the House are convinced that we must balance the budget. But balancing the budget is not just about money it is about our children's future. For too long now, the Federal Government has operated in the red. The resulting debt is a threat to America's future generations that must be dealt with.

So while Democrats offer class division and dance around the tough issues, Republicans offer a return to a balanced budget.

REPUBLICANS CONSIDERING CUTTING MEDICARE

(Mr. HILLIARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, today the Republicans in Congress are considering proposals which will cut Medicare funding by billions of dollars, causing large reductions in Medicare services which will have a devastating effect on our senior citizens. We cannot allow this to occur. Our seniors are already on fixed incomes, with many of them having a tough time making ends meet from month to month. How can the Republicans in the light of day

even contemplate slashing our senior citizens at a time like this, when they deserve more and more health care?

Mr. President and Mr. Speaker, one of the speakers mentioned a minute ago that the President did not participate, that he is AWOL in the Medicare debate. I would like to say that the President is not AWOL, there is no need today to deal with the Medicare crisis. The Medicare crisis is only the political crisis that the Republicans have started this date.

USING COMMON SENSE TO FIX THE BUDGET

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, if an average American were to pile up huge debts and engage in reckless financial behavior, that person would eventually be held accountable, either by the law or by his creditors.

But here in Washington, somehow, the reverse is true. The Federal Government has become immune to accountability. They have racked-up trillions in debt and yet continue their irresponsible spending. Unfortunately there is a price for all this irresponsibility. That price will be shouldered by average Americans who are not responsible for the failed policies of the past.

If we do nothing to remedy the out-of-control spending here in Washington, our children will suffer a very dim future. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that spending more than you earn is not the wisest thing—especially in the long run. And, it does not take a wizard to fix the budget. All it takes is commonsense, determination, honesty, and a realization that we simply cannot continue with the old Washington way of doing things.

REPUBLICAN DOUBLESPEAK ON MEDICARE CUTS

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to warn my colleagues to beware of Republican doublespeak on Medicare cuts.

The greatest doublespeak is that Republicans will reform Medicare to give seniors more choices by giving them vouchers to buy private insurance.

What they do not say is that the vouchers will not be worth enough to enable them to buy an insurance policy that gives them the choices they have today.

They do not say that the value of the vouchers will force seniors into the lowest cost and most restrictive HMO's.

They do not say that the value of the voucher is going to be ratcheted down every year to become worth less and

less until seniors are saddled with virtually all the costs of their health care.

They do not say that the vouchers will toss seniors to swim alone in the perilous and confusing currents of the private insurance market—the same market that has reduced their children's choices.

Vouchers are not more choice. They spell the end of Medicare coverage that seniors—and their families—rely on.

FIXING MEDICARE

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, it takes guts to do what is right instead of just doing what is popular. President Clinton's own Medicare Board of Trustees, which includes Cabinet Secretaries Donna Shalala, Robert Rubin, and Robert Reich, believe that under current law, Medicare will be bankrupt by the year 2002, or possibly even earlier. These are the President's people telling us. Doing nothing is disaster; doing nothing is a formula for bankruptcy. But what solutions have the Clinton Democrats proposed to correct this problem? None. I hear rhetoric today, but I do not hear solutions.

Mr. Speaker, the Clinton Democrats are showing a willingness to let the system collapse by maintaining the status quo. On the other hand, the Republican majority will rise to the challenge of trying to show some guts and offer some real solutions to preserve, to protect and to improve Medicare. The Republican majority is committed to honor our contract with older Americans. I know I am one, and I represent a lot of others.

Mr. Speaker, it is real simple. The program is going broke, and we are going to fix it because we care about senior citizens. We want them to have good quality, affordable health care options, and we know doing nothing is disaster, so we are going to do something.

HOW NOT TO CUT THE BUDGET

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, first there was school lunches. Republicans voted to cut school lunches to pay for tax cuts for American's wealthiest citizens. Then Republicans proposed cuts in student loans to pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest special interests. Now Republicans want to cut Medicare services. They want to increase premiums, and copayments and deductibles.

Mr. Speaker, I am a deficit hawk. I want to balance the budget. But we cannot balance the budget, we should not balance the budget, by cutting taxes for the rich, by building star wars, and increasing military spending,